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10 Weekly Review
Iran's face-lift

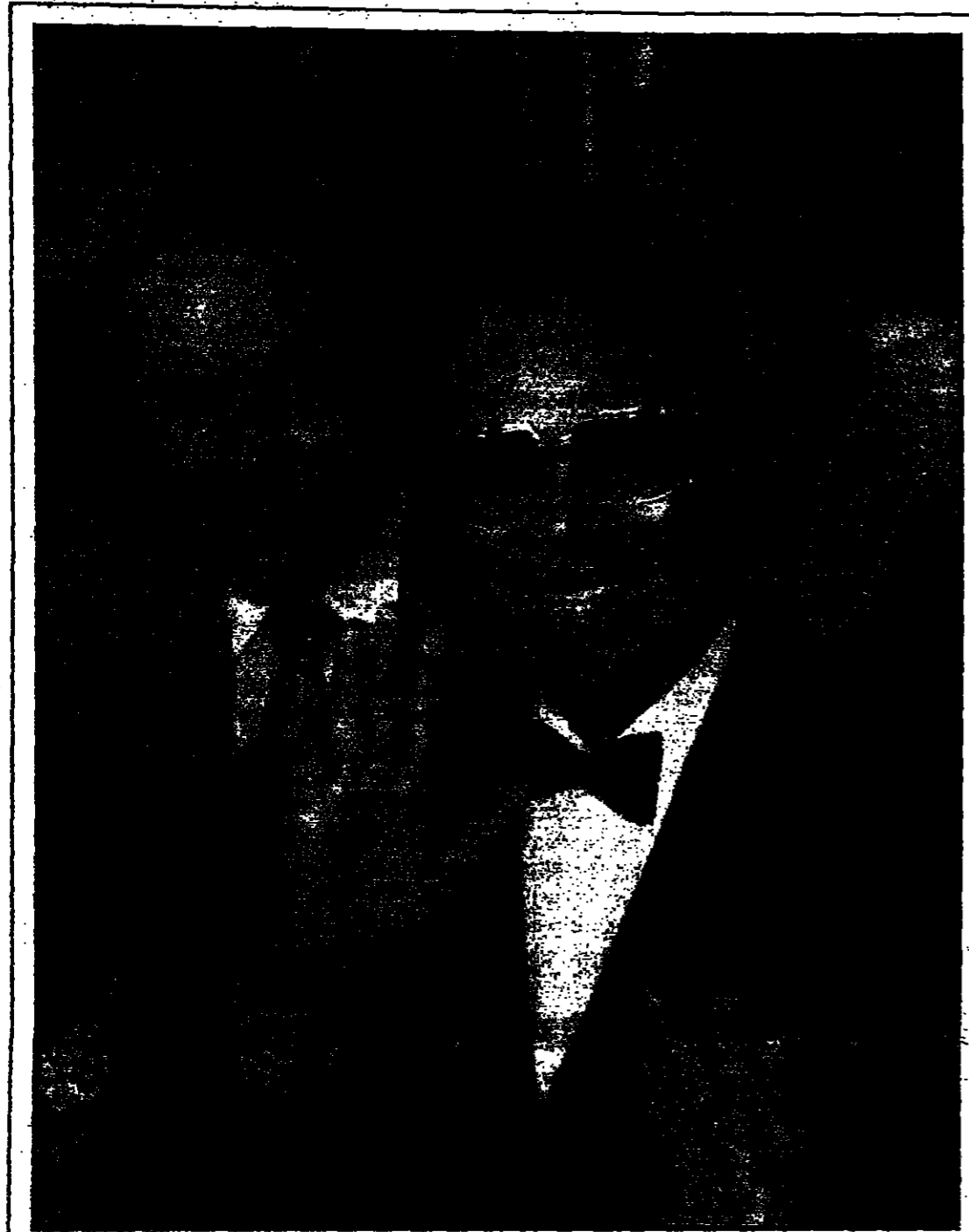


7 Arts & Entertainment
Love in red and white



24 Sports
Cowboys out of NFL playoffs

INDEX
Arts & Entertainment 7
Business 19
Crossword 23
Movies/TV 23
Opinion 8
Sports 24



Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, with Palestinian Authority Civil Affairs Minister Jamil Tarifi looking over his shoulder, speaks to the press after meeting with members of the PA cabinet in Ramallah yesterday. (AP)

Farrakhan arrival catches government by surprise

By JAY BUSHINSKY and news agencies

Controversial US black leader Louis Farrakhan caught Israeli officialdom off guard when he showed up yesterday at the Allenby Bridge for a visit of both Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Farrakhan said he hopes to visit al-Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem today. Farrakhan, whose intended visit was met here with mixed attitudes when it was originally announced earlier this month, had not been expected until mid-January.

He was, however, greeted by a PA representative upon his arrival. Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry yesterday ruled out any meeting between the Nation of Islam leader and Israeli officials as long as he "adheres to vicious and hateful language against Israel, Judaism, and the Jewish people." This stand was taken after prolonged consultations about Farrakhan's unexpected entry to the West Bank as a guest of the Palestinian Authority. "The entrance of Louis Farrakhan to Israel was not coordinated with the Israeli govern-

ment," a ministry statement said. However, he will be allowed to travel freely within the country on condition that "incitement is prevented and public order maintained." Cabinet secretary Dan Naveh, in his capacity as chairman of the government forum which traces antisemitism, took a less diplomatic course and called on Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Interior Minister Eli Suissa to have Farrakhan expelled "at once," contending that this should be done "in a legal way."

See FARRAKHAN, Page 2

Cabinet unable to give PM pullback map for Albright

Mordechai, Sharon at loggerheads over scope of withdrawal

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will not be able to show a pullback map to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in their planned meeting Thursday, nor will he be able to even give her a percentage figure concerning the scope of the prospective redeploy-

ment, government sources said yesterday. The prospect of a second IDF withdrawal in the West Bank appeared to be tearing the government apart yesterday, as ministers divided at least four ways and the US evidently concluding that a quick and definitive decision is not in the cards.

PA wants joint anti-terror effort, Page 2

Besides the divergent approaches to the territorial issue expressed by Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, the National Religious Party's ministers insist that even the most minimal pullback must be contingent on strict fulfillment of the Palestinian Authority's commitment to root out terrorism.

Foreign Minister David Levy stressed the harm that would be caused to relations with the US and the European Union if a viable formula for troop redeployment and a concomitant handover of West Bank territory are not delineated and implemented.

US Assistant Secretary of State Martin Indyk evidently concluded that overt pressure for a cabinet decision that would conform to American specifications might exacerbate the situation, and the Clinton administration should bide its time - until January, if necessary.

Indyk conceded to Netanyahu that Israel evidently needs time to work out the parameters of the projected troop pullback, indicating that this was understandable and acceptable to the US. A senior Israeli official said Netanyahu "will be able to tell her which areas can be relinquished and which are vital to Israel's security."

Netanyahu's inability to pinpoint the precise sectors to be evacuated is a direct result of the inconclusive cabinet session on the redeployment issue, during which Mordechai and Sharon were at loggerheads over the amount and location of areas that could be handed over to the PA. It was prompted as well by the cabinet's decision to reconvene tomorrow and to tour the areas under discussion next Monday.

Military experts who helped draw the map proposed by Mordechai contended that 500,000 Palestinians will remain under Israeli control if the cabinet adopts the map prepared by Sharon. They also contended that Israel would retain 70 percent of the West Bank. This was described as a potential impediment in future negotiations. Sharon recommends keeping a 20-kilometer-wide swath of land in the Jordan Valley, while Mordechai wants between 7 km. - 10 km. Sharon's plan calls for a 10 km.-15 km. buffer zone along the Green Line, while Mordechai's measures between 3 km.-6 km.



Foreign Minister David Levy speaks with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu at yesterday's cabinet meeting. (Brian Henders)

Other represents "national interests" and includes all settlements, as well as their needs, such as roads and water, government sources said. However, the percentages included in Mordechai's maps are being kept secret.

"We are in a reality of signed agreements and both sides need to make compromises," Mordechai told the cabinet. In rebuttal, Sharon argued that the dimensions of the security zone delineated by Mordechai are "too narrow" and therefore would not provide the tactical maneuverability required for it to serve its defensive purpose.

His map would leave all the settlements and the mountain aquifer under Israeli jurisdiction. Sharon maintained that the government must determine which areas should be designated as security zones and therefore cannot be surrendered, noting that this would be in line with the ministers' deci-

sion in principle of last week. He said all existing settlements must be inside the projected security zones and that the PA must adhere to all the commitments it undertook with regard to security before the pullout can be implemented. This included the obligation to provide information about the fate of missing Israeli soldiers which, he said, the PA possesses but has withheld "for cynical reasons." Sharon expanded the premise for his territorial formula by pointing out that it is impossible to predict what the situation in the West Bank will be 10 or 20 years from now. "Security arrangements are meant to furnish answers to situations which could develop, such as a change in the relevant Arab states' governments, a change in the US attitude toward the regional dispute, or the future involvement of Russia in Middle Eastern affairs," he said. Arieh O'Sullivan contributed to this report.

Gov't OKs health-basket expansion

By JUDY SIEGEL and DAVID HARRIS

The cabinet yesterday approved an agreement between long-feuding Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman and Health Minister Yehoshua Matza that adds 14 vital drugs to the basket of health services that insurers must provide their clients.

The cost of the medications - for cancer, AIDS, diabetes, schizophrenia and other chronic disorders - will be covered by "savings from existing unnecessary expenses as a solution to the general problem of health funding." These "superfluous costs" will be identified by Matza, "in full cooperation with the finance minister."

Within a month, Neeman will present the cabinet with a proposal for increasing the budget for the basket of health services by NIS 150 million.

After yesterday's vote, Matza thanked the cabinet and Neeman for "responding to the need for adding the new and vital drugs. This is a social amendment of the highest order. A healthy society is that whose leadership responds to those in the population who are ill. But the solution given here still does not

solve the problem of the basket of health services and its income for 1998. No mention was made of whether other vital drugs that become available in the next few years will be added to the basket.

Although Neeman and Matza agreed on financing the vital medications, after weeks of strident exchanges between themselves and their respective underlings, apparently they do not agree on commentary. Matza's spokesman said the agreement suggested a mechanism to cover the NIS 1.3 billion deficit in the health system; Neeman's spokesman said the problem would be dealt with by the Knesset, especially the Finance Committee, in its deliberations on the arrangements bill, which has sections aimed at shrinking the basket of health services.

The Health Ministry said yesterday that its expects government allocations totalling NIS 700m. to cover more than half of the health system's deficit; the rest could be covered by efficiency measures in the health funds (NIS 300m.) and payments by the public (NIS 300m.).

The Israel Cancer Association welcomed the cabinet decision, which eliminated the "need-

less threat to cancer patients who need strength to fight the battle for their lives. Now patients will get the medications as a right and not as charity. We hope that there will be no repetition of the situation in which cancer patients have to serve as hostages in a disagreement among authorities."

The suit by 10 AIDS patients in Tel Aviv District Labor Court against the Finance and Health Ministries over the health funds' refusal to cover the costs of the anti-AIDS drug "cocktail" was cancelled due to the government's decision.

Labor MK Adisu Massala said he did not intend to withdraw his private member's bill on including AIDS drugs in the basket of services, since he insists that "every new drug for AIDS patients and HIV carriers that is approved for marketing here must be included in the basket automatically."

Liat Collins adds: The Knesset is scheduled to hear no-confidence motions in the prime minister today over the state of the health service. The motions were filed last week by Labor, Meretz and Hadash. They are not expected to pass.

Khatami calls for dialogue with American people

Washington: Teheran's talk must be coupled with deeds

By BARRY HAY

TEHERAN (Reuters) - President Mohammed Khatami went further yesterday than any other leader of revolutionary Iran in opening the way to dialogue with the US, saying he hopes for a thoughtful dialogue with the American people "in the close future."

The 55-year-old Shi'ite clergyman broached the taboo topic of talks with the Americans, Iran's adversary for two decades, by telling reporters at a news conference: "I declare my respects to the great people of the United States,

and I hope that in the close future I would have a dialogue and talk with the people of America, and I hope this will not take long."

Gone were the fiery flourishes and rhetorical references to the US as the "Great Satan" which colored the speeches of his predecessors and still run through discourses by Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In their place, Khatami made repeated references to the great people of the US. Khatami, who defeated conservative rivals for power in a landslide election in May, reiterated his desire for dialogue between civilizations. But he deflected the question when he was asked how he expected dialogue with the US to come about. And he did not go so far as to say there would be contacts any time soon between the two governments.

"The government of the United States is the government of the people. We respect the choice of the peo-

ple," he said. "At the appropriate time I will present my words to the American people. I would hope for a thoughtful dialogue with the American people and through this thoughtful dialogue we could get closer to peace and security and tranquility."

Khatami's pronouncement drew a restatement of existing US policy from the White House. "The United States is interested in deeds, not words," spokesman Barry Tivy said. Iran and the US have had no diplomatic relations since Washington severed them in 1980 when radical students seized the US Embassy in Teheran and held 55 Americans captive for 444 days.

Arieh O'Sullivan adds: Israel welcomed the moderate statements made by Khatami.

In reply to a query by The Jerusalem Post, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's media adviser Avi Benyahu said that any change would have to be accompanied by positive policies by Iran.

Jewish grandmother front-runner in Guyana

By MARILYN HENRY

A Jewish grandmother from Chicago is likely today to become the president of Guyana, a South American nation in which 90 percent of the people trace their ancestry to India or Africa.

Janet Rosenberg Jagan, 77, appears to be the frontrunner in the election, The New York Times reported yesterday. She is the widow of Cheddi Jagan, a political hero of the majority Indian population, who was president when he died earlier this year.

The Jagans met as students in Chicago in 1942 and went to Guyana to form the People's Progressive Party, with a Marxist, pro-Soviet and anti-colonialist ideology.

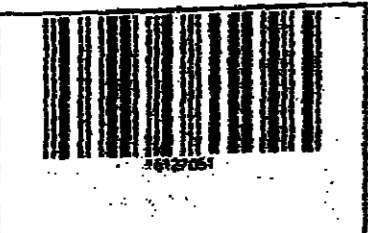
Guyana gained independence from Britain in 1966.

Jagan has spent 54 years in Guyana, often battling the British or US governments. She was imprisoned under British rule and had her American citizenship yanked by the US, which feared that Guyana was becoming "another Cuba." Later, when given a chance to recover her American citizenship, she declined, the Times said.

Her Jewish background does not appear to be an issue. "She is an honest woman who does good for all classes and races of people," Abdool Sattaur, 61, a Moslem porter told the Times. "That she is Jewish does not bother me in the slightest. What matters is that she suffered with Cheddi and with us ever since British times."

If Jagan wins, she would become the first Jewish woman outside of Israel to be a head of state.

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Textile workers demand jobs

Textile workers pull down police barricades and burn signs opposite the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. Hundreds of textile workers came to Jerusalem to protest their dismissals. The workers demanded to return to work, saying they were not interested in receiving severance pay. Kitan Industries laid off 250 workers last week following a decision to cut back the company's spinning and weaving operations. Kitan announced yesterday that PCB, a Migdal Ha'emek maker of printed circuit boards, and Elite's Nazareth-based operation will absorb 'dozens' of the employees Kitan laid off. The company also is discussing arrangements with other potential employers.

(Text: Jennifer Friedler; Photo: Brian Hendler)

High Court asked to place cap on yeshiva deferments

By BATSHEVA TSUR and ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Despite a growing number of draft deferments for haredi yeshiva students, the Defense Ministry does not plan to change its induction policy.

This emerges from the state response to a petition to the High Court of Justice by MKs Amnon Rubinstein and Haim Oron (both Meretz).

Rubinstein has requested the court order the ministry to show cause why it will not stipulate "a reasonable maximum quota" for yeshiva student deferments. The case will be heard tomorrow.

According to the response submitted by Uzi Fogelman, head of the High Court division of the Justice Ministry, there were 26,262 deferments in 1995 (6.4 percent of recruits) and 26,547 (7.5%) in 1996.

"Over the years, there have been numerous private members bills presented to the Knesset on changing this status quo. None of them reached advanced legislative stages," the state response notes.

According to existing legislation, the defense minister has the discretion to decide on the mat-

ter. In 1995, it notes, then-defense minister Yitzhak Rabin received the findings of a committee he had empowered to investigate the issue, headed by Defense Ministry deputy director-general Haim Yisraeli.

It recommended that the ministry review the situation from time to time in keeping with security needs.

It also expresses doubts about the efficacy of the yeshiva students as soldiers, should they be forced to serve.

In the state response, Fogelman says that "the statistics... do not show evidence, at this stage, of a fear that state security could really be affected. Fixing a ceiling could create substantive legal and public difficulties."

The state plans to request that the court reject the petition on the grounds that it is not qualified to deal with the issue.

Rubinstein said that the petition is different from previous ones in that it only calls for setting a limit on the number of deferments for yeshiva students.

Previous petitions had sought to dissolve the arrangement altogether.

Rubinstein blasted Defense

Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's refusal to set a ceiling, saying it was contrary to the Yisraeli study, which found that a whopping 40 percent of those gaining deferments on religious grounds did not really study in yeshivot as they claimed.

"The minister of defense has to react to Haim Yisraeli. What he has done instead is make a decision based on political reasons instead of defense ones," Rubinstein said.

Rubinstein and Oron are seeking a ceiling of 4%. According to Rubinstein, the number of people seeking deferments to study in yeshivot has doubled in the past four years.

At this rate, by the end of the century one out of every 10 people eligible for the draft will be deferred for religious reasons.

Rubinstein also criticized the lax treatment of draft dodgers, saying that 92% wind up getting released from the military altogether.

"What is worse is that those few who are eventually tried are given minimal fines of NIS 1,000-NIS 1,500. They are getting a prize for evading military service," Rubinstein said. "This is increasing the burden on those who do serve."

Memorial for Jewish veterans set for Ammunition Hill

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

A monument honoring all the world's Jewish war veterans is to be erected on Jerusalem's Ammunition Hill, site of one of the most famous battles in the 1967 reunification of the city.

The decision was made at a recent London meeting of the organizing committee of the World Assembly of Jewish War Veterans, said Maj.-Gen. (res.) Moshe Nativ, Israel's representative and initiator of the monumental project.

Nativ, chairman of Tzvet, the organization of IDF pensioners, said he saw the monument not only as a memorial but a unique tourist attraction for visitors who may wish to learn more of Jewish valor in armies around the world.

"It's not a gimmick," Nativ said. "It doesn't exist anywhere else in

the world and the only place it can truly be set up is here in Israel."

Nativ said he proposed the idea to the French, English, and American members of the committee, who enthusiastically endorsed it. The proposal is to be brought before a world gathering of Jewish veterans in Jerusalem in February for final approval.

"The idea is that whoever wants to identify with a Jewish fighter will have an address. The site chosen was Ammunition Hill," Nativ said.

Some 250 Jewish veterans are expected to participate in the conference scheduled for February 16-19 as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations. Participants will be coming from the US, South Africa, Greece, France, England, Finland, and the former Soviet Union; Nativ said. They will be meeting with President Ezer

Weizman and top IDF officers, including Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak.

Nativ also wants to establish a library and center at the museum that will allow research into Jewish fighters in history.

"This memorial could enhance its development of the whole issue of Jewish warriors," Nativ said.

"No money will be asked for," Nativ said, adding that all funds for erecting the monument will come from private donations. "I think that we will find plenty of willing contributors to this project."

Nativ said the monument would be symbolic of a Jewish fighter. Col. (res.) Shimon Cabaner, current director of the museum at Ammunition Hill, praised the idea of a memorial for Jewish veterans worldwide at the site of his museum.

Benizri denies reports he plans to run in election for mayor of Jerusalem

By ELI WOHLGELERINTER

MK Shlomo Benizri (Shas) yesterday denied published reports that he plans to run for mayor of Jerusalem, but said he has not ruled out the possibility.

"A journalist called and asked whether it was true I'm going to run for mayor," Benizri said. "I told him that I didn't speak about it with anyone yet, that I had to speak with Aryeh Deri and Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, but that it was true that many people I meet in the street tell me that if I ran, they would support me."

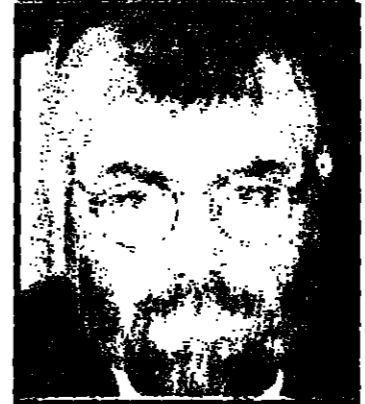
Benizri said he spoke with Deri and other Sephardi leaders over the weekend, and that they "took a decision for now not to do anything. We have to think about it. For now, my answer is negative."

Benizri said one issue would be how much support his candidacy would have among the other Orthodox parties.

"If the haredim will not support me, we won't do anything," he said. "If they will support me, we can talk about the future, because I believe many secular people will support me."

Benizri said that the secular community trusts him because "I speak their language, and they feel that I can connect between secular and religious people. I think that even the Arabs will support me."

A spokesman for Mayor Ehud Olmert said the mayor would not comment on particular candidates, but that he "gives his blessing to everyone thinking about running, and he hopes that it will be a



MK Shlomo Benizri (Isaac Harari)

democratic and fair vote." Benizri said he has a very good, friendly relationship with Olmert - "I don't have anything against

him" - and that he was upset about the report because "Olmert will think that I am going against him. But you can tell him that I don't have any plans."

Deputy Mayor Rabbi Chaim Miller (United Torah Judaism) was quoted as saying that his party would not support any haredi candidate for mayor, as it would only serve to increase tensions between the Orthodox and non-Orthodox camps in the capital.

One political insider said it would be difficult for Benizri to form a viable coalition because "haredim are not a majority in the city, the National Religious Party would never vote haredi, Ashkenazim would not vote for a Sephardi, and the haredim never take a *ba'al teshuva* (returnee to religion) as their leader."

PALESTINIAN PRESS REVIEW

By MICHAEL SELA

Islamic conference

The Islamic conference in Teheran last week received worldwide attention. While important leaders of Islamic countries preferred to stay at home, the Palestinians attended at the highest level.

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's participation in the conference was covered by the Palestinian newspapers in minute details.

The entire text of Arafat's speech to the conference was printed in all three dailies.

Commentators looked at the conference in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. A cartoon in the official *al-Hayat al-Jadida* showed the Islamic world as a person with one eye pulled out.

It is Jerusalem, symbolized by the Dome of the Rock, which Netanyahu holds in his hands.

The visit of Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to Ankara during the conference was not a coincidence, according to Nabil Khouri in *al-Quds*. Relating to a US declaration that Mordechai's visit was an element on the road to solve the Middle East problems, Khouri asked "whether both countries' attitude toward Syria and Iraq is one of the means for peace, which our shallow political education is unable to understand?"

Iran's treatment of the problems raised during the conference and its efforts to end it with a moderate declaration proved that Iran has gradually been changing its radical image, according to Hani Habib in *al-Ayyam*.

Despite echoes of Iranian internal struggles, "it seems that Iran succeeded to challenge the American will, break the blockade of isolation and return forcefully to the international arena."

Furthermore, the wide Arab attendance, despite bitter rivalries with Teheran, was another official challenge to the American policy in the region after the failure of the Doha economic conference.

The real lesson will be the ability of Arab and Islamic states to overcome internal conflicts and create mechanisms to prevent more conflicts in the future, wrote Basem Jir in *al-Quds*.

PA census

The first Palestinian general census was the national event of the week.

Al-Hayat al-Jadida published telephone numbers, E-mail and web-site addresses for the census office, along with its daily reports on the controversy surrounding the census.

A general census of the population is an essential procedure for any economic, social, cultural and even political activity, wrote *al-Quds* in an editorial. The census is needed also to collect facts for the final settlement of the conflict.

"Therefore, it is strange that Israel puts obstacles in the way of the project," according to *al-Quds*. Even though Israel has declared the annexation of eastern Jerusalem, officially the fate of the city it to be negotiated by both sides, not by one-sided procedures.

"Has Israel anything to hide?" asked *al-Quds* a rhetorical question, adding that, "as long as Palestinians live in Jerusalem, the Palestinian Authority has the right to know all statistical facts about them."

Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the intifada, *al-Ayyam* published a special supplement, with memorial stories and opinion articles.

Two journalists visited the Jabaliya families, whose relatives were killed in the car accident which became the catalyst for the intifada. Another article told stories of mothers whose children or husbands were killed.

In a report in *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, Kamal Astal mentioned negative results of the intifada: the damage inflicted on the Palestinian education system and the deterioration of the economy.

Entitled "What is going on in our place?" *Al-Hayat al-Jadida* related in an editorial to a severe problem in the Palestinian society: revenge as a means of solving families disputes. Hostilities and mutual bloodshed continue for years.

Demanding severe punishment for those who are involved in such actions, the paper wrote: "either the rule of law and the awe of the authorities prevail, or our nation retreats backwards while [other societies] move forward."

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Civil Service Commissioner:

Mrs. Netanyahu's staff is too big

By BAT SHEVA TSUR

Civil Service Commissioner Shmuel Hollander plans to propose new regulations with regard to the employment of civil servants among the staff of the prime minister's wife.

cized article in Friday's Yedioth Aharonot about the persons employed by Sara Netanyahu. Hollander said he would act to introduce the regulations "in the next few days... The report acted as a catalyst for a step which should have been taken."

bureau. "When the Prime Minister's Office supplies civil servants for purposes like this, it has to be formulated by law," Hollander said, pointing out that the premier's wife is neither a civil servant nor an elected official.

to expect the wife of a prime minister to walk around alone, to take a bus or a taxi. With regard to a bureau, this is a question. On the one hand, she has public activities as the wife of the premier and perhaps needs an office to deal with mail...

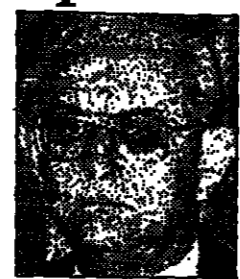
From the purely legal, formal point of view today, the wife of the premier does not have the right to a bureau of her own, a secretary, or other administrative staff.

Goldberg slated to replace Ben-Porat

By BAT SHEVA TSUR

Supreme Court Justice Eliezer Goldberg is the leading candidate to replace Miriam Ben-Porat as state comptroller when she retires after handing in her annual report this summer.

The comptroller, who is chosen by secret ballot by the Knesset, serves for five years, and Ben-Porat will have completed two terms.



Eliezer Goldberg (Brian Henkler)

least 90 days before the assumption of office by the new candidate. The law does not stipulate that the comptroller must be a justice, but like Ben-Porat, her predecessor Ya'acov Maltz also came from the Supreme Court.

Livnat to meet Pollard

By JUDY SIEGEL

Communications Minister Limor Livnat will visit convicted spy Jonathan Pollard at Butner Penitentiary in North Carolina on Wednesday and present him with personal letters from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, and Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai.

few weeks ago, it is the first time that the prison authorities are allowing Israeli photographers and reporters to cover the encounter.



New stress center Cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the International Center for the Research of Coping with Stress and Emergency in Tel Hai yesterday is Kiryat Shmona deputy mayor Herzl Ben-Asher. Looking on (from right) are Dr. Molly Lahad, head of the center; Dr. Lenore Behar, North Carolina's deputy secretary of education; Prof. Jack Richman; and Aliza Amir-Zohar, president of Tel-Hai College. The center will work in cooperation with North Carolina University.

SPNI in turmoil

By LIAT COLLINS

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, which has fought many environmental battles over the years, is currently engaged in a struggle over who will determine its future role. The infighting between the original SPNI leaders and a breakaway group burst into the open over the weekend with news stories and a television report.

NEWS

in brief

MDA staffers intensify sanctions

Magen David Adom staffers, who declared a work dispute against the government a year ago, have intensified their sanctions by transporting patients without charge and without filling out identifying forms, as well as refusing to participate in emergency drills. The MDA workers' union said they are furious not only at the Finance and Health ministries, but also at the Histadrut.

Possible rabies case in Nahariya Hospital

A 58-year-old man from the North was admitted to Nahariya Hospital a few days ago with symptoms that could point to rabies. The man complained about headache and throat pain, respiratory difficulties, high fever, and confusion. Doctors noted scratches on his face and hands caused three or four months ago by an unidentified animal, but the man had not reported this. The patient was put in isolation and more tests are being done.

Cabinet votes to close Pi Gilgot gas ranch

The cabinet yesterday accepted National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon's recommendation to close the Pi Gilgot gas depot by December 31, 2000, the ministry announced yesterday. In the interim, an alternative site should be set up, it said.

MKs visit Falash Mura

Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee Chairwoman Naomi Blumenthal yesterday visited the Falash Mura currently living at the Hatzrot Yosef caravan site. Blumenthal, who visited with committee members MK Adisu Massala (Labor) and Eliezer Zandberg (Likud), said that she hoped the camps for the Falash Mura would be closed within two years. The Absorption Ministry already has announced plans to close other caravan sites for the other Ethiopian immigrants in the early months of 1998.

Kupat Holim Leumi staff told Blumenthal that the two buildings at Hatzrot Yosef allocated for treatment are insufficient and that in the winter residents wait two to three hours in the rain for treatment. She also was told that there is a need for more personnel to help explain to the Falash Mura how to avoid various types of disease.

Some 1,400 Falash Mura are currently at the site, 400 of them children. Aryleh Dean Cohen

Activists call for re-think on Haifa marina

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel is calling for a re-think on Haifa's proposed multi-million dollar marina and hotels complex project. The SPNI is urging members of the Coastal Waters Commission, which is due to meet today, not to make any decision regarding the proposals. The society maintains that the plans have been altered and amended since they were approved by the National Planning and Building Commission in 1988. The SPNI, which is opposed to the project, claiming it would harm Haifa's coastline and endanger marine life, is pressing for the proposals to be referred back to the National Planning Commission for further consideration.

Man sentenced to 8 years in prison for raping stepdaughter

A Rishon LeZion man yesterday received an eight-year prison sentence and two-year suspended sentence for sexually abusing his stepdaughter for two years. Tel Aviv District Court Judge Amnon Strassnov, Ze'ev Hammer, and Shelli Taiman said they could find nothing positive to say about a man who had lied in court to discredit his stepdaughter.

at night when the rest of the family was sleeping, he would rape his stepdaughter. He often would wait for her to come home at night. She didn't tell anyone because she didn't want to upset the family.

The stepfather denied all charges, saying that the girl was trying to ruin his relationship with her mother. Initially, the mother supported her daughter, and the stepfather was barred from the house.

Book advertisement for 'The Big Book of Pasta' by Beth Elon. Features a large image of the book cover and promotional text.

Where to eat in Israel advertisement. Lists various restaurants across different cities like Eilat, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv, providing names, addresses, and phone numbers.

100 Continuous Days at special rate advertisement. Promotes a tourism column with contact information for Tel Aviv Area.

Turkey attacks EU's enlargement decision

By Hidir GOKTAS

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz yesterday denounced an invitation to attend an EU conference next year, indicating Ankara would not attend because of the conditions set for participation.

"Turkey's attendance at the EU conference has been made dependent on the fulfillment of conditions," Yilmaz told reporters after a two-hour cabinet meeting held to discuss the outcome of the summit in Luxembourg. "This invitation does not have any importance for us. We will not accept any conditions."

A state minister subsequently said this meant Turkey would not attend the European Conference in Britain in March. The conference will launch the group toward its biggest ever expansion. "Turkey will not participate," State Minister Sukru Sina Gurel told reporters, elaborating on Yilmaz's comments.

At its weekend summit, the EU failed to issue Turkey a formal invitation to membership talks, a source of deep disappointment to Yilmaz and his secularist political allies. They see membership in the EU as a

guarantee of Turkey's Western vocation and a blow to their domestic Islamist critics.

Yilmaz said Turkey would continue its existing relations with the EU, but said development of the relationship depended on Europe fulfilling its obligations. "Despite the position stated at the Luxembourg summit, Turkey will continue its will for incorporation in the EU. But for this to happen the EU must not insist on this erroneous and troublesome path," he said.

The EU called at the summit for Turkey to improve its human rights record, protect the rights of its Kurdish minority and move to solve long-standing territorial disputes with Greece, including the future of the divided island of Cyprus.

Yilmaz said Turkey would not hold talks with the EU on Cyprus and Greece after the decisions in Luxembourg. "After this, our government will not discuss the subjects of Cyprus and our relations with Greece," he said.

The EU asked members of the European Conference - bringing together the 15 existing EU partners, 11 applicants, and Turkey - to respect the jurisdiction of the Hague-based International Court of Justice for resolving disputes and to respect the principles of the European Union.

Traditional rival Greece welcomed the move. "We fought hard and made our arguments understood," a senior Greek government official who asked for anonymity said. "In essence all our positions over what Turkey should do to come closer to the EU were endorsed." The Turkish press, meanwhile, said the country faced the end of its European dream, already decades in the making.

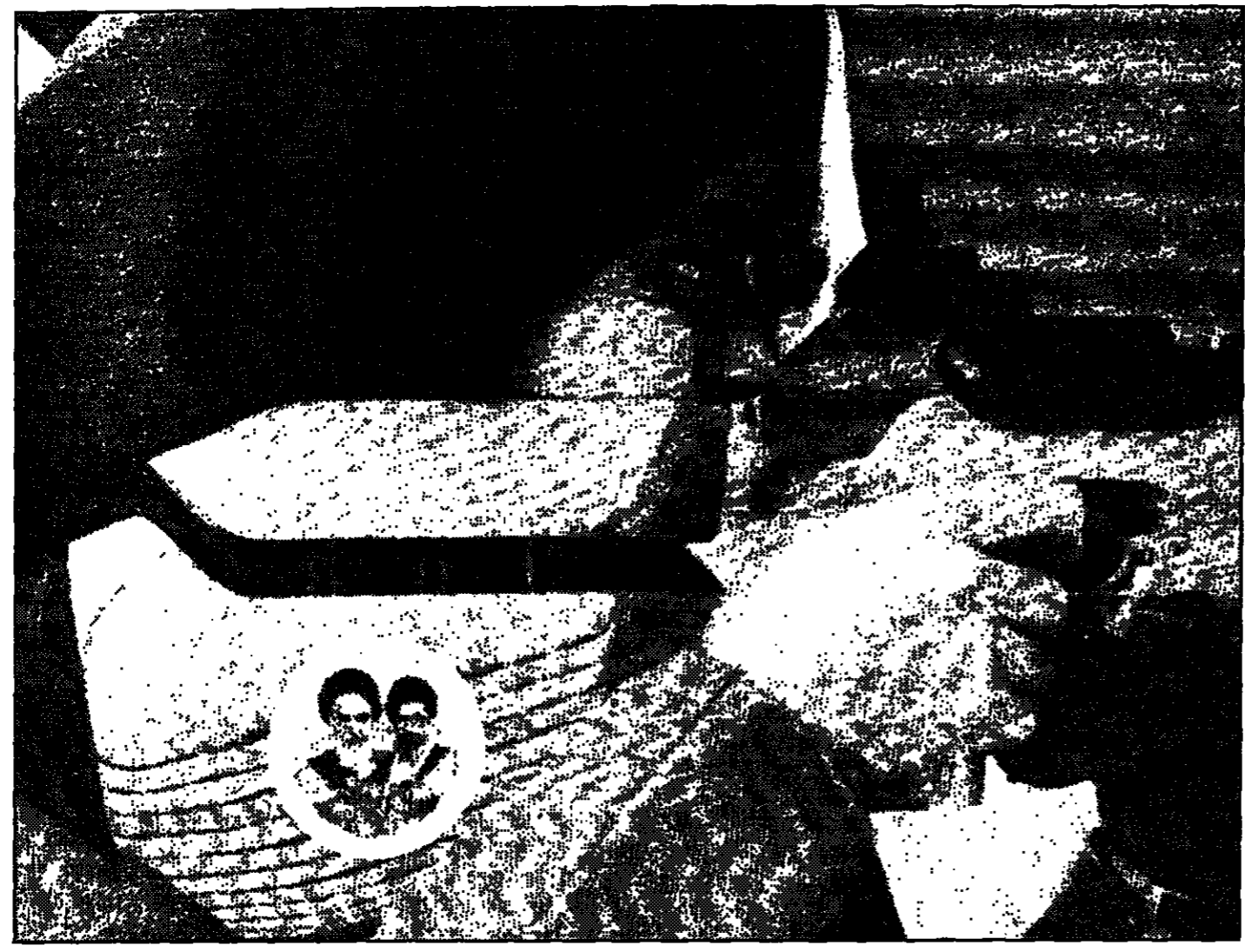
"Ankara angry at the EU," said a head-

line in *Sabah*.

The *Hurriyet* daily said Turkey told Europe it might withdraw its application for full membership, as it had not been invited to formal EU membership talks.

"We are at a point now far away from where we were 10 years ago," *Hurriyet* columnist Oktay Eksi said of Turkey's membership bid. "From Turkey's point of view the situation holds no hope."

The Turkish government has told the wealthy 15-member bloc it will set its geopolitical sights in another direction if the EU does not hold out a genuine prospect of membership.



The other side of the veil

A member of the woman's Iranian shooting team practices yesterday at the Azadi sports complex in Teheran. The team is participating in the Islamic Countries Women Sports Games. The sticker on the gun shows Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, former spiritual leader and founder of the Iranian revolution (left), and Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, current spiritual leader. (AP)

Yeltsin says he's back at work though still ill

By PHILIPPA FLETCHER

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian President Boris Yeltsin, convalescing from a viral infection in a sanatorium outside Moscow, said yesterday he is not yet fully recovered but is in full command.

"I caught a sore throat somewhere. I'm a bit weak. On the whole, I don't feel too good," Yeltsin said, speaking in a hoarse voice after casting his vote at the sanatorium in an election for the Moscow city parliament.

"The doctors say it is a normal virus... It's nothing special, it's the one going around in Moscow," he told reporters, adding that it would take about 10 days to clear up.

"I am a Moscovite so I caught it. It shows that I am in touch with the Moscovites," he said with a smile.

The 66-year-old president seemed out of sorts, but moved freely around the room where a ballot box and polling booths had been set up for him and his wife.

Asked if he is working, he said aides bring him a huge pile of papers each day.

"Half a meter at least. I spend at least four hours sitting at a table, with breaks of course," he added.

"Things are all right in Russia. I am following things all the time...

In a word, there is control. I am being kept informed, about security matters too, so don't worry."

On Saturday, doctors said Yeltsin's temperature was normal for a second day running and his blood pressure was stable.

The surgeon who conducted heart surgery on Yeltsin last November said Friday that the disease had nothing to do with the operation and that the president should be back at work full time next week.

The Kremlin had said on Saturday Yeltsin would be allowed to take a walk outside. But a spokesman was unable to confirm he would go out yesterday, when temperatures plunged to minus 20 Celsius in the snow-covered capital.

Yeltsin expressed concern over recent tragedies in Russia, including two air crashes and an explosion in a coal mine which killed dozens of people.

"Such things have not happened for a long time," he said, adding that everything is being done to help those injured and the relatives of the victims.

The Kremlin has said Yeltsin would not have any meetings with politicians this week and that several planned events had been cancelled.

These include a Wednesday meeting of a council governing a union created between Russia and Belarus this year, and a session of the committee governing a customs union with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Belarus a day later.

A meeting with Bulgarian President Petar Stoyanov planned for Friday has also been put off.

But, underlining that it is business-as-usual for the government, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin is due in Turkey for an official visit on today and tomorrow.

The last time Yeltsin voted, in the 1996 presidential election in which he won a second term, he was also at Barvikha, situated among woods and low hills west of Moscow.

Officials then explained that he was suffering merely from "a cold." It turned out that he had renewed heart problems, which eventually forced him to have a bypass operation.

The Kremlin has since pledged more openness about Yeltsin's health and has issued daily bulletins since he went into Barvikha on Wednesday with the infection, which doctors said had developed from a cold caught on a visit to Sweden a week before.

Italy mourns Fiat heir Agnelli, 33

By PHILIP PULLELLA

ROME (Reuters) - Italy yesterday mourned the death of Giovanni Alberto Agnelli, destined to become head of the Fiat industrial empire before succumbing to stomach cancer at 33.

"The shattered fairy tale" ran a headline Milan's *Corriere Della Sera*, reflecting the tragedy of a man who left behind a young bride, a three-month old daughter, and a suitcase full of personal and professional dreams.

Agnelli, who died on Saturday, was the unwilling prince charming of the dynasty Italians like to consider their Kennedys.

A spokesman said he was buried in the family tomb in a cemetery at Villar Perosa, outside Turin, while the city most associated with the Fiat fortune was still waking up.

The timing was a reflection of how Agnelli tried to shun the media spotlight perpetually trained on the nation's first family.

Agnelli was publicly announced as Fiat's heir apparent in 1995, and had been tipped to take over next year when chairman Cesare Romiti is due to step down.

But most Italians admired Agnelli for his personal values rather than his business prowess, although he was equally respected in the boardroom, the streets, and the soccer stands.

Newspapers were full of touching photos of Agnelli with his British-American wife, architect Avery Howe, whom he met while being educated in the US and married in 1996.

The shy young man with a far-away look in his eyes was being groomed to become chief of Italy's biggest private industrial empire, before the shock discovery last April that he was suffering from a rare form of stomach cancer.

One of his last happy moments came four days before his death, when he was quietly taken from the family estate in the countryside near Turin to see his beloved Juventus soccer team play Manchester United.

Juventus won a dramatic match 1-0 and qualified for the quarter-finals of the European Cup. But footage of Agnelli in the stands that night appeared to show he was in pain.

The boy manager who like to read Byron lost his nine-month battle with cancer, but kept his dignity throughout the ordeal.

"Farewell, normal guy," said Turin's *La Stampa*, which, like the Juventus soccer team, is owned by the Agnelli family.

Agnelli, known as



Giovanni Alberto Agnelli and Avery Howe leave the church after their November 1996 wedding in Montopoli, Tuscany. (AP)

"Giovannino", was president of the Piaggio motorcycle group and nephew of Fiat honorary chairman Giovanni "Gianni" Agnelli.

Despite being born into Italy's richest and most famous family, Agnelli like to call himself a pragmatist with dreams.

At 18, he worked on an assembly line in one of the Agnelli factories in industrial Turin to see how life was for workers.

"He didn't know how to do anything. He was supposed to wash pieces and prepare the work bench," Pietro Suppini, a factory worker who knew him at the time told *La Repubblica* newspaper.

But the humbling experience

served him well in later years.

"I am convinced that industry's role is to improve society. Maybe this is more important than simply churning out profits," he said.

Agnelli joined Piaggio, which had been in his mother's family, in 1987 and within seven years was chairman and chief executive of Piaggio Veicoli Europei SpA.

He turned the company around, building it into the leader in the European scooter sector and the fourth worldwide, behind Japanese giants Honda, Suzuki, and Yamaha.

If Agnelli had lived to take over the reins at Fiat, it would have put the family name back in the top

post again in time for its centenary in 1999.

Agnelli's death opens up the question of the succession to lead the huge industrial concern into the 21st century.

An indication of the respect Agnelli had gained not only in the boardroom but among workers came with comments of tribute from trades union leaders.

"The death of Giovanni Agnelli is a great loss to the nation," said Sergio D'Antoni, leader of Italy's second biggest trade union, Cisl. "I believe, that even in his short life, he showed clear signs of great managerial skills. I am deeply saddened."

Klaus recaptures party while Czech coalition talks continue

By JAN LOPATKA

PODEBRADY, Czech Republic (Reuters) - Outgoing Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus won re-election as chairman of his Civic Democratic Party yesterday and said the vote put to rest the scandal over fund-raising that brought down his government.

But he said the Civic Democrats had not decided whether to join the new cabinet his former allies are trying to assemble in the country's finely balanced parliament.

More than five years in power make Klaus the longest-serving prime minister in post-Communist Eastern Europe. His three-party center-right coalition fell apart last month over allegations that the Civic Democrats held a secret foreign bank account and had improperly accepted donations of 7.5 million crowns (\$217,000) in 1995.

The split had looked like a mortal wound for Klaus, who denied acting improperly but was aban-

doned by senior party colleagues. Instead, he won re-election at yesterday's party conference by an emphatic 227 votes to 72 for former interior minister Jan Ruml.

"I take this as an immensely serious commitment. I take this as a responsibility and I am calling for all your maximum participation and cooperation," Klaus told delegates after the vote.

He said the funding issue had been resolved by his re-election. "Congress is not an interrogation was solved here," he said.

Klaus has ruled out his own participation in what is expected to be a short-lived new administration, and had previously said the party should go into opposition ahead of anticipated early elections.

Yesterday, however, he said the party's newly-elected leadership would decide whether to join a reformed cabinet.

If they stay out, their former partners - the centrist Christian Democrats and pro-business Civic

Democratic Alliance - would try to form an interim cabinet.

Christian Democrat leader Josef Lux, who has been leading talks on forming a cabinet, told President Vaclav Havel on Friday that key political leaders, including the head of the main opposition Social Democrats, believed the new government should have only a limited mandate ahead of early elections.

The outgoing coalition controlled just 100 seats in the 200-member lower house of parliament, so the government's survival sometimes hung on a single vote.

Jiri Skalicky, chairman of the Civic Democratic Alliance, told commercial TV Nova that without Klaus's party, "the new cabinet would be 'hostages of the opposition.'"

Havel, in his weekly radio address broadcast on Sunday, said he hoped to name a government this week and by next week at the latest.

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The World

Nuclear Priesthood Gets a New Credo

By STEVEN LEE MYERS

WASHINGTON — In the cold war, some of the greatest minds of Washington pondered how best to use nuclear weapons to destroy much of the world. With theological gravity, they dreamed up concepts like "controlled escalation" and "mutually assured destruction," a doctrine that came to be known simply as MAD.

They were called (unflatteringly) the "nuclear priesthood," the corps of strategists in and around the Pentagon and the National Security Council who actually contemplated waging nuclear war. Theirs was the arcane, euphemistic world of "single integrated operational plans." What they were really talking about was Armageddon.

Now the Clinton Administration has rewritten the nation's guidelines for using nuclear weapons. And the changes, which leaked out last week despite a cloak of secrecy, showed that the thinking about nuclear weapons — and the priesthood —



Nuclear-prepared in Wyoming.

has changed as much as the world itself. Under the new guidelines, the Pentagon has officially abandoned the cold war tenet that it must be prepared to fight, and win, a protracted, all-out nuclear war. Instead, the military will focus its strategy (not to mention its super-secret list of potential targets) on deterring attacks on the United States and its allies carried out not just by nuclear-armed nations but those with also chemical and biological ones as well.

No One Wins

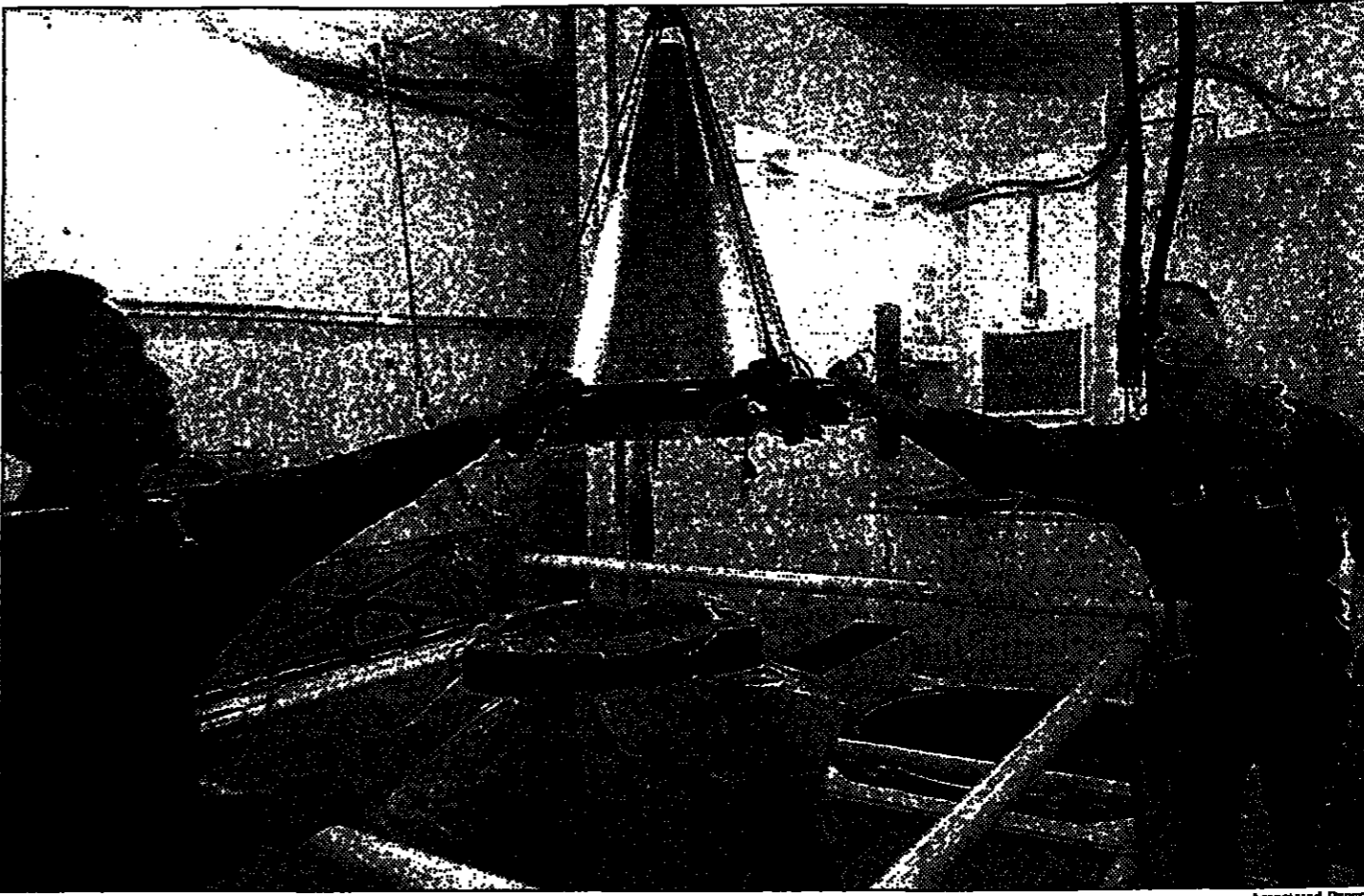
The guidelines — quietly signed by President Clinton just before Thanksgiving — do not mean the Pentagon is going to now point the nation's nuclear weapons at countries like Iraq or Libya. Instead, the guidelines will become the basis for the Pentagon's annual exercise in drawing up options for using nuclear weapons in a whole range of potential conflicts.

In rewriting the rules, Mr. Clinton's aides said they were simply adjusting to fundamental shifts in power since the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent sharp reductions in nuclear warheads. But they also said the changes acknowledged what many had long believed despite official doctrine: If it ever came to all-out nuclear war, no one could really win. The old priests, the Administration was saying in so many words, had gotten it wrong.

"The cold war was a period in which we had these massive nuclear stockpiles pointed at each other and we talked about protracted nuclear war and we talked about prevailing," said Gen. Eugene E. Habiger, commander of the United States Strategic Command near Omaha. "There's a more realistic approach now."

But if the new guidelines jettisoned Alice in Wonderland scenarios for fighting on, even as every American and Russian city vanished in radioactive clouds of dust, they have also raised a host of new questions that are as mind-twisting as the old ones:

Is it possible to have deterrence with a smaller nuclear force in a far less orderly world? If the threat of nuclear annihilation kept the Soviets from starting World War III, will it stop today's rogue regimes from launching a terrorist strike?



The world's changed; so has American nuclear strategy: Airmen attach a warhead to a Minuteman III missile in a Nebraska silo.

"If there's an irrational actor," said Franklin C. Miller, principal deputy to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Threat Reduction, "you may not be able to deter the irrational actor."

From the beginning, the nuclear priesthood has always been an arcane, mysterious calling.

In the Pentagon and in think tanks like the Rand Corporation, men like Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, Robert S. McNamara, Paul H. Nitze and Herman Kahn wrestled not only with questions of war and peace but also with details of technology. The debate was so ponderous and detailed that it was considered beyond the minds of ordinary people.

The end of the cold war has radically changed it. Deterring the Evil Empire has evolved into deterring some unforeseen enemy. Instead of abstractions about the end of the world, the focus today is on arms control, "de-targeting" missiles (even though they can be quickly re-targeted) and other efforts to build trust among former enemies.

Robert G. Bell, the President's senior director for defense policy and arms control at the National Security Council, said that by the end of the cold war, nuclear strategy had entered "the realm of the hypothetical." Since then, the need for deterrence from an

immediate threat has evolved into a more general hedge against instability. And that has changed the nature of the priesthood, a term that he, like others involved in nuclear strategy, abhors.

General Habiger — the modern-day successor to the nation's first strategic commander, the flamboyant, cigar-chewing, doomsday-talking Gen. Curtis E. LeMay — today devotes much of his time to exchanging visits with his Russian counterparts, in an effort to safeguard what's left of the Soviet nuclear arsenal. And while steel-nerved specialists still work round the clock in an underground command center beneath General Habiger's headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base, ever ready to launch a nuclear strike if ordered, the atmosphere is more evocative of corporate insurance than "Dr. Strangelove."

'More Realistic'

Mr. Bell said the point of rewriting the guidelines, which replace those put in place by President Reagan in 1981, was not to forswear the use of nuclear weapons but to make the doctrine "more understandable and more realistic — to the extent that anything in this area can be realistic."

While the guidelines shift the focus more to potential enemies with chemical or biological weapons, Mr. Miller said the core strategy remained the same: to dissuade an enemy from attacking by putting at risk whatever that enemy holds dear.

"Whether it was a Soviet leader or is today a rogue state, you have to spend a lot of time understanding what makes these people tick," Mr. Miller said. "What is it that they value most highly? And then you have to say, 'This is what we're going to do to you if you cross a particular line.'"

The new guidelines, not unexpectedly, have already drawn criticism. Advocates for arms control said the nuclear powers still had too many warheads that could be too easily launched — either by accident or malevolent design. The critics say the new guidelines show that the nuclear priesthood is simply searching for a new raison d'être.

Michael Krepon, president of the Henry L. Stimson Center, a research institute in Washington, said that despite the guidelines, nuclear strategists have not caught up to changing reality.

"I look at the nuclear priesthood as islands," he said. "The water temperature around these islands is changing, and the islands are becoming more isolated."

Persian Gulf

Iran's Venture in Image Rehab

By DOUGLAS JEHL

TEHERAN — It was a kind of coming-out party, with all eyes focused on Iran as it stepped forward after nearly two decades mostly shrouded from world view. What guests glimpsed at an international Islamic conference here was in some ways infuriatingly contradictory: a poised, gracious Iran eager to leave a good impression, but one also still burning with old resentments.

But then, ever since its rebirth in the 1979 revolution, Iran has been a far more complex creature than the one depicted in Western snapshots of fiery mullahs, subservient women and legions of martyrs. And if the gathering in Teheran last week was hardly an acknowledgment that the old view had been altogether mistaken, the huge turnout suggested a willingness to entertain the hope that Iran's coming of age may bring with it more maturity. Those looking for moderation could find evidence, or not.

There was the inaugural address by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, heir to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as the steward of revolution, with the usual tirade against Western influence. But then came more conciliatory remarks by the new President, Mohammed Khatami, whose calls for opening Iran to the outside world have given voice to a very different dimension of Iranian political thought. And while reiterating its opposition to the United States' policies toward Israel and military role in the Persian Gulf, Iran did not push those views on others, acting more statesmanlike than revolutionary.

The Dissident

Washington, of course, was not invited; had it been, it would have stayed away. Alone in the world, the United States remains intent on isolating Iran, regularly denouncing the clerical regime in terms that probably rank it second to Iraq in American demonology. But some of the symbolism on display in Teheran seemed to underscore a spreading view that Iran is not only too important to ignore, but is also perhaps a country with which others can do business.

From Saudi Arabia, which has shunned Iran as a most undesirable neighbor: a drapery from the door of the Holy Kaaba of Mecca — a remarkable gift from the capital of Sunni Muslim orthodoxy to the rival Shiite Muslim regime that remains the world's only Islamic republic.

President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey, another ally of the West, exchanged embraces with Iranian clerics who regularly criticized his government for its secular orientation and its military ties with Israel. Even Foreign Minister Amr Moussa of Egypt — on his visit to a city that has a street named after the militant Muslim Egyptian who assassinated President Anwar el-Sadat — said the gathering had produced "some kind of improvement in ties" between his country and Iran.



Conflict of interests: Saudi delegates at the Islamic conference, with a portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini.



A boy and his toy, a helicopter that was on display in a public park in central Teheran last week.

Iran, for its part, has silenced its calls for an export of the Islamic revolution that toppled the Shah and sent shock waves across the Middle East. Mr. Khatami's stunning victory last May over a candidate supported by the religious establishment showed how far democracy has come. And while Ayatollah Khomeini is still the supreme leader in what remains a mullahocracy, the support that 69 percent of Iranians gave to Mr. Khatami shows the urbane face of those who never felt a kinship with the radical clerics.

"For the first time, we can see Iran as not just black or white, but as complex and more refined," a diplomat here said. "I'm not saying they are angels, but this is not a one-man dictatorship, like Saddam's in Iraq."

One question still difficult if not impossible to answer is whether overtures like those on display last week encourage moderation or

coddle the worst elements in Iran. American views have veered from one extreme to the other, with little success on either end of the spectrum. The effort to reach out to Iran reached its most absurd and embarrassing proportion with the secret arrival in 1986 of the Bible and cake-bearing mission led by Robert McFarlane, President Reagan's national security adviser, to which Iranian officials turned their backs. Since then, Washington's pattern has been to turn its own back on Iran until it forswears, for one thing, its support for violent opponents of a broader Middle East peace.

Iran, in turn, has said the economic sanctions imposed by the United States leave no grounds for any overture at all. But among its neighbors, Iran has begun to extend olive branches. It has played a restrained role in trying to mediate conflicts in countries like

Afghanistan and Tajikistan, while working hard to promote warmer relations with American allies like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which until recently had followed the United States in regarding Iran as something akin to the devil incarnate.

It was the dividends of those efforts that were evident here last week as Iran took the reins for the next three years of the 55-member Organization of the Islamic Conference. Not only was the international gathering the largest to be held in Teheran since the revolution, but it far eclipsed in size and prominence an American-sponsored gathering in Qatar less than a month earlier, which was marred by an Arab boycott in protest of Israel's participation.

Still Skeptical

Misgivings within the Sunni-dominated Islamic world of Iran's Shiite regime still run so deep that few if any of those who attended were doing so to demonstrate wholehearted support for Iran's domestic and internal policies. Many were motivated first by obligations to an Islamic organization they hope can wield increasing weight, and perhaps second by a curiosity about Mr. Khatami, a man who had been unknown to many of them. Tiny oil-rich monarchies like Kuwait and Bahrain that have embraced American military protection remained skeptical of their giant neighbor's claims that it has no hostile intentions. "There are a lot of lookers but no buyers," a European diplomat said.

But in taking a fresh look at Iran, with its 60 million people, vast territory and considerable resources, the guests saw an Iran that, at least on the surface, had taken great pains to present a post-revolutionary face.

In the lobby of the former Intercontinental hotel, which was nationalized after the revolution, a mosaic that read "Down With the U.S.A." was removed, after 18 years, during a pre-conference renovation. In its place, computers offered direct, high-speed links to the World Wide Web. In guest rooms, televisions offered satellite programming, still officially against the law in the rest of Teheran. And while Ayatollah Khomeini's speech featured a fierce condemnation of Western civilization and what he called its gluttony, carnality and greed, Mr. Khatami, by contrast, quickly pronounced himself in favor of "the establishment of dialogues" to achieve "deep-rooted understanding of the cultural and moral dimensions of other societies."

That was enough for the State Department to declare that the United States, too, would "welcome and support the idea of an open dialogue between different cultures and civilizations." But in Teheran, many foreign residents and visitors said they believed that both sides could benefit by being less oblique.

"It is an open question whether these hints of moderation are tactical or strategic," a European diplomat said. "But it is incumbent on everyone, including the United States, to watch closely and listen."

Cheating Hearts

Continued From Page 9

place of employment. But for every close call of today, there are dozens of what-ifs from yesterday. If, for example, The Washington Post had known that Janet Cooke was lying about her Vassar College credentials, the editors wouldn't have hired her, let alone published her concocted Pulitzer Prize-winning story about a child heroin addict that now stands as one of the most damaging frauds in American journalism.

The publishers of Marquis "Who's Who in America" learned long ago of the pitfalls in believing every accomplishment in the 100,000 entries it prints annually. The editors seek to verify only the most outlandish claims; for the rest, the book contains an appeal to readers to report errors or apparent fabrications. Paul Canning, senior managing director, explained the how of "Who's Who": "If at some point it comes to our attention that we published false information, then we either remove the false information or make the determination to remove the biography entirely, because they've created a breach of trust with us. It happens a number of times a year, but it doesn't happen daily."

The State Department would certainly agree, and is reviewing its background procedures after failing to catch the fairly clear discrepancy in Mr. Lawrence's life story.

Although the public may scorn, even pity the multimillionaire ambassador, it tends to celebrate those con artists and film-fluffers whose deceits bring no harm, whose lies dishonor no war dead. Few begrudged a small-time pool hustler called New York Fats the chance to cash in on a popular movie by rechristening himself Minnesota Fats. Fewer still reviled Ferdinand Waldo Demara Jr., the overweight, unassuming man who inspired a 1960 movie called "The Great Impostor."

Mr. Demara, who died in 1982 at the age of 60, borrowed other people's names and credentials to experience life at its fullest. He actually got jobs as an assistant warden at a Texas prison, a dean of philosophy at a Pennsylvania college, a teacher in a Maine village. Perhaps his most daring exploit came during the Korean War, when he posed for several months as a surgeon on a Canadian destroyer, suturing wounds and performing minor operations.

In the end, the difference between that impostor and the ambassador is sweetly ironic: only the impostor's memories of wartime service aboard a ship were true.

The Nation



Doing the two-step: Clinton and Gore at a Rose Garden press conference this fall.

Clinton Can Now Sing, 'Me and My Shadow President'

By RICHARD L. BERKE

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE swept into the international talks on global warming here last week and, with a bit of drama, added a passage to his speech that was not in the prepared text. He told the delegates from about 160 nations that after conferring with President Clinton by telephone, he was instructing the American delegation "to show increased negotiating flexibility."

The oratory isn't — but with those words, the Vice President helped break an impasse in the talks. And although he invoked the President's name, Mr. Gore later made it clear that adding the critical passage was his idea.

"It was primarily influenced by my assessment of the state of play here," he said. "I then consulted with President Clinton back in the White House and added the paragraph that you're referring to."

In other words, it was pretty much Al Gore calling the shots — another confirmation that the early portrayals of Hillary Rodham Clinton as a "co-President" are no longer accurate. Mr. Gore comes closer to filling that role, and now his portfolio is expanding.

With Mr. Clinton now running for nothing but his place in history, and wearying of some of the starkly political duties he once enjoyed, he is increasingly turning to Mr. Gore, the man who could help insure the Clinton legacy, as his stand-in. Never one for the funeral fare of past Vice Presidents, Mr. Gore is taking on big roles with gusto as he carefully, but surely, steps forth as a contender for the Democratic Presidential nomination in 2000.

On the Team

"It seems weekly there are illustrations of the Vice President taking on greater roles, more visible projects that clearly enhance his position," said Senator Thomas A. Daschle of South Dakota, the Democratic leader. "They put him in a strong position to be perceived as heir apparent."

Indeed, Mr. Gore's high-profile assignments — from debating Ross Perot on free trade early in the Clinton Administration, to landmark telecommunications legislation in 1996, to meetings with leaders in Moscow and Beijing just this year — have given Americans ample opportunity to grow accustomed to him as an engaged leader, one perhaps even worthy of their trust and future votes. "He bought into the team —

he's part of it now," said Roy Beck, a longtime aide and confidant to Mr. Gore and former deputy chief of staff for Mr. Clinton. "He's not going to walk away from it."

Which, of course, could be a problem for Mr. Gore. There are perils to being inextricably tethered to a President as shaken by controversy as Mr. Clinton.

Consider the inquiries into the Administration's fund-raising practices that knocked Mr. Gore's carefully planned political agenda off stride this year. Though he has perhaps regained momentum after Attorney General Janet Reno's refusal to seek an independent inquiry into his fund-raising calls, the Vice President's vulnerability is clear. It has often seemed as if Mr. Gore — and not the President — was the favored target of Republicans. Why bag a lame duck when you can weaken the guy who wants his job?

Mr. Gore again could have been a target here in Kyoto, particularly since he was the highest-ranking leader to attend — if only for a day — and because his credentials on environmental issues are such that Mr. Clinton takes his cues on global warming

The Clinton and Gore staffs are integrated, and poised for 2000.

from Mr. Gore.

In the sort of balancing act that will occupy him for the next three years, the Vice President sought to satisfy environmentalists who are the heart of Democratic Party's traditional liberal base as well as the more moderate business interests who helped elect Mr. Clinton in the first place.

In this case, the balancing act may have worked. While the global-warming accord reached here won the unqualified praise of few — and it faces a daunting battle for ratification in the Senate — Mr. Gore was widely credited by participants for at least helping to keep the negotiations alive.

It was the kind of performance that Mr. Gore's loyalists say should help convince people that he deserves the top job.

"For the first time in history we have a Vice President who can step into the role of President literally on a moment's notice without missing a beat," Mr. Neel said, "and with the world understanding it would be a seamless handoff."

Mr. Gore's role grows out of the working relationship, and genuine friendship, that

has developed between him and the President since the two baby-boom Southerners formed their ticket in the 1992 Presidential campaign. They have weekly private lunches, and their rapport carries over into a high degree of integration between their staffs.

White House Boosters

In fact, there is something of a shadow Gore Administration in place already: many of Mr. Clinton's senior aides first worked for Mr. Gore, and have a stake in seeing the Vice President win the office himself in 2000. And in the Cabinet, Andrew Cuomo, the Housing Secretary, and William Daley, the Transportation Secretary, are particularly close to the Vice President. (When he departed Kyoto, Mr. Gore left behind a protégé and important player in the talks, Katie McGinty, chairwoman of the Council on Environmental Quality.)

The White House's drive to help Mr. Gore is intensifying, as was evident after a recent speech by Representative Richard A. Gephardt, the House minority leader, who is angling to run for the Democratic nomination in 2000.

Speaking at Harvard University, Mr. Gephardt offered a sharp critique of the Clinton-Gore agenda, though he did not mention either the President or Vice President by name. The response was swift: Rahm Emanuel, a senior White House aide, publicly castigated Mr. Gephardt for his "flip-flops on multiple issues." It was a surprising break from the tradition of White House officials staying neutral in nomination battles within their own party.

Knowing One's Place

As he has assumed more Presidential roles, Mr. Gore has taken care not to behave too much like a President. His success thus far has come because he has been careful not to upstage Mr. Clinton.

"Al Gore has all the qualities of being a very strong leader," said Richard W. Riley, the Secretary of Education. "But he's the Vice President. He's not trying to be the President as Vice President. That's why they get along so well together."

And as much as Mr. Clinton wants a President Al Gore to complete his legacy, the current President also wants it known that he has not finished burnishing it himself.

Insisting he was as engaged as ever, Mr. Clinton said in a recent interview in the Oval Office that "there will be a lot going on next year."

"And there will be a lot going on in '99," he added. "And a lot going on in 2000."

Talking to Congress

The Witness Is Shocked and Appalled

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM

WASHINGTON EXPLAINING last week to the House committee investigating campaign finance matters why she had decided not to ask for the appointment of a special prosecutor, Attorney General Janet Reno declared: "My only guiding star is my desire to follow every lead, to find the truth and to apply the law the right way. I don't care where the facts lead, because I'm going to follow them as far as and wherever they go."

On paper, such sentiments may seem platitudinous. In the hearing room, they sounded so schmaltzy that some reporters snickered and several Congressmen sighed in exasperation.

On Screen

But in Congressional hearings, the reality that counts is on television. With the tight shot showing Ms. Reno's eyes steady and her jaw clenched, her words sounded heartfelt, even profound. On television, she appeared to be defending her honor against browbeating inquisitors.

Ms. Reno had proved again her mastery of the technique of taking such a moral high ground under interrogation that questions can be ducked with impunity and the questioners made to look like bullies.

This approach, which others appearing before Congressional committees are increasingly adopting, serves more than its short-term purpose of allowing witnesses to avoid answering embarrassing questions. In the longer term, it bolsters the public's unfavorable view of Congress.

The latest New York Times/CBS News poll, in which more than 1,000 adults were questioned by telephone last weekend, found that only one-third approved of the way Congress is handling its job. More than half said that the Congressional campaign finance investigations were primarily a partisan attempt by President Clinton's political opponents to wound him.

There are many reasons why the public holds these views. And the failure of the Congressional inquiries this year to shed much new light on campaign finance matters had several causes — among them, the refusal of key witnesses to appear, the malleable nature of the campaign laws and the tendency of senators and representatives to make political speeches rather than ask questions.

How to make an interrogating Congressman look like a pompous jerk.

But one reason, no doubt, that Congress is held in such low regard and that recent Congressional investigations have been less than smashing successes is that at televised Congressional hearings — one of the few opportunities the public has to see Congress in action — witnesses have proved so adept at offering platitudes that undercut the lawmakers' standing.

Posing a perfectly reasonable question last week, for example, Representative Dan Burton of Indiana, the Republican chairman who was conducting the hearing, asked Ms. Reno from whom she had sought advice on the special prosecutor matter.

Ms. Reno replied as if Mr. Burton were threatening the process of justice and as if identifying her advisers were tantamount to

divulging their confidential advice. "I am not going to discuss who advised me," she said. "I think it is important that they be able to talk freely and openly with me because the decision is mine."

The more aggressive the questions became, the worse Ms. Reno made the interrogators look. For instance, Representative John L. Mica, Republican of Florida, suggested that the Attorney General could be held in contempt of Congress for refusing to give Congress any portions of a memorandum from Louis J. Freeh, the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that had advocated a special prosecutor.

Without directly addressing the question of memorandum, Ms. Reno responded: "Well, I just think it would be very, very wrong for Congress to become part of a prosecution and an investigation. It would politicize investigations. It would politicize the prosecution process. I think that's wrong."

Mr. Freeh spoke in the same vein. Asked

A technique dating at least to Lillian Hellman is now more polished than ever.

whether the Justice Department had interfered with his investigation, he asserted: "I call the shots as I see them. My job is not to please anyone in this town at the expense of what I see as my duty."

Of course, Ms. Reno and Mr. Freeh are not the first witnesses at a Congressional investigation to find firm footing by delivering lines that could have been taken directly from the script of a melodrama.

A Tear in His Eye

A decade ago, Lieut. Col. Oliver L. North won a national following for telling the committees investigating the Iran-contra affair, "I came here to tell you the truth — the good, the bad and the ugly." He had broken the law and arranged for money and arms to go to the right-wing rebels in Nicaragua, Colonel North said, a tear in his eye and a catch in his voice, because he had been "the only person left" who could help them.

Going back 45 years, Lillian Hellman, the playwright, gained more national acclaim than she had ever earned from her plays for refusing to cooperate with the communist-hunting inquiry of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and declaring, "I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions."

But lawyers who often represent witnesses before Congressional committees say that the technique is much more prevalent now than it used to be. One such lawyer, who insisted on not being identified, said he had his clients rehearse lines that would make them appear aggrieved and the questioners bombastic.

"I tell them to keep in mind that they are addressing the television audience, not the senators," the lawyer said. "If some senator wants to lecture them, I say all the better. It makes the senator look pompous, it makes my client look put-upon and it uses up all the time for questions."

Some politicians are aware of what is going on, but they are not sure what to do about it.

"People are used to getting their politics on Hollywood screens," said Senator Robert F. Bennett of Utah, a Republican member of the Senate committee that investigated campaign finance. "Then they see someone like Reno, and it sounds real to them."



Attorney General Janet Reno, under questioning on Capitol Hill Tuesday.

The Nation

Giving Credit Where Debt Is Due

By TIMOTHY L. O'BRIEN

AS Frank Capra's mid-century holiday movie classic, "It's a Wonderful Life," crowds its way onto television screens, feel free to snicker at the moment when a desperate George Bailey screams at his negligent uncle for misplacing bank funds and threatening to plunge the family into debt.

"Where's that money?" he shouts. "Do you realize what this means? It means bankruptcy and scandal and prison!"

Scandal? Prison? How quaint. America, safe haven of the highly leveraged country and the highly leveraged corporation, is now home to the highly leveraged citizen. Debt is very, very cool.

Sub-Prime

Right now, consumers are firmly into debt overdrive as they pursue the annual rite of the holiday spending binge. Americans have even bestowed an affectionate new term on their credit cards: "mall money." That mall money is liberating, too. A recent survey of 1,000 consumers by the American Bankers Association found that two-thirds had no holiday spending plan, even though they typically end up taking about six months to pay off holiday debt. And these are not poor people. The same survey found that among those who were late with credit card payments, 44 percent earned more than \$50,000 a year, while only 4 percent earned less than \$15,000.

American consumers are carrying about \$1.2 trillion in installment credit, up about 50 percent from just four years ago, and the average credit card holder has four cards and about \$4,000 in high-interest debt. Nonetheless, lenders have begun to target the least creditworthy and most unsophisticated debtors-to-be, dubbing them "sub-prime" borrowers. Loan delinquencies are on the rise and personal bankruptcies continue to soar.

But hey, why worry? Even bankruptcy doesn't stop the solicitations from lenders.

Banks, which once upon a time emphasized savings and thrift, are now relentless marketers of debt — or credit, to use the sanitized term favored by lenders. Billions of credit card solicitations compete for space in

American mailboxes each year, with Banc One, MBNA, Citicorp, and Chase Manhattan jointly accounting for more than half of the volume.

Mortgages can be had for 125 percent of a house's market value, quite a repudiation of banks' traditional hesitation to lend no more than 80 percent against a home. Since late October, Fleet Financial Group has mailed more than one million blank checks in denominations ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000, inviting borrowers to use the checks to pay taxes or "spruce up your home."

"What debt is doing is that it anesthetizes the purchasing process," said Stephen M. Pollan, a financial adviser and author of a new book, "Die Broke" (Harper Business). "Debt may be O.K. for a house or a car or an education, but for anything else you're an idiot. For a bottle of champagne or a new wardrobe you're going to go into debt? It's just instant gratification, a short-lived burst of fun, and it's not smart."

Debt is not the stigma it was for the generation that came of age during the Great Depression and World War II. So when did things change?

Cultural milestones are never easy to mark, but when it comes to consumer debt, Fresno, Calif., in September 1958 offers a likely one. Bank of America targeted Fresno for the first mass mailing of credit cards, as detailed by Joseph Nocera in "A Piece of the Action: How the Middle Class Joined the Money Class" (Simon & Schuster, 1994). Some 60,000 credit cards flooded the mailboxes of Fresno. A little more than a year later, two million credit cards were circulating around California.

"There had been no outward yearning among the residents of Fresno for such a device, nor even the dimmest awareness that such a thing was in the works," Mr. Nocera wrote. "Here began the trickle of what we now call financial products, aimed largely at the middle class, that would become, by the 1980's, an avalanche."

Still, in the 1960's most borrowers paid off their

credit card balances monthly, as an aversion to financial risk born in the Depression held sway. It would take another decade and the arrival of runaway inflation to bring consumer debt into the mainstream.

"Credit cards were the enablers but inflation was the trigger," Mr. Nocera said in an interview. "People in the late 1970's started recognizing that it made sense to go into debt because of inflation."

America's trouble with debt is nothing new. After all, Georgia was founded as a debtors' colony, and Thomas Jefferson died a debtor after a lifetime of buying things that would have made Imelda Marcos blush.

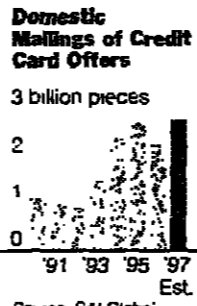
But for many years it was only an elite few like Jefferson who could take on inordinate debt as consumers. Farmers and other debtors largely borrowed in order to produce something. Puritans and Quakers regarded excessive personal debt as a sin, views that were widely and firmly held until relatively recently. In the 1800's, the end of the year did not entail holiday shopping sprees but was a time to pay off debts to begin the new year with a clean slate and a clean conscience.

"Debt was a horror in the 19th century," said Robert Sobel, a financial historian at Hofstra University. "Mortgages were much shorter in the 19th century, only about 10 years. Burning the mortgage was a big family event. Nowadays, people don't even think of mortgages as debt."

Of course, there weren't VCR's, Timberlands or Gap jeans to covet in the 19th and early 20th centuries. But once the emotional shock of the Depression subsided and the post-World War II consumer boom occurred, Americans were primed to take a new look at debt. All they needed were credit cards and a nudge from those burgeoning inflation rates.

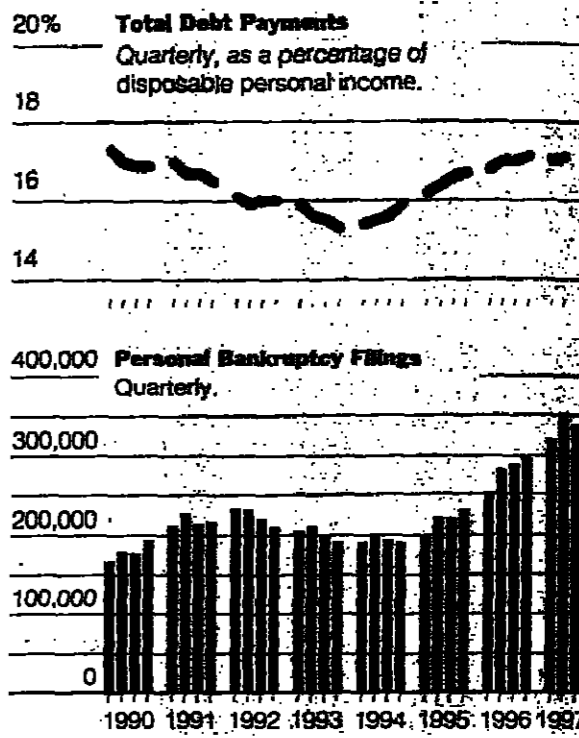
Treading Water

Now the costs are adding up. The consumer debt spigot has been wide open for the past five years and some borrowers are beginning to tread water, despite the robust economy. Several credit card companies, including such rapidly growing issuers as Advanta, have taken a financial beating after coaxing risky borrowers with low introductory teaser rates. Charge-offs for bad credit card debt have risen sharply this year at Advanta and



Lending Spree

As the stock market sets new highs, and inflation becomes a foggy memory, Americans are taking on more debt. But more are faltering under the burden.



other big credit card issuers. And if the economy slows significantly, America's penchant for debt may take an even uglier turn.

"People think about money in a certain way until a cataclysm arrives that forces them to change," said Mr. Nocera, who added that it will probably take a sharp downturn in the economy before people think it wise to lighten their debt loads.

If this makes you queasy, just turn off "It's a Wonderful Life" and tune in the Lifetime cable channel. There, every weeknight, you'll find a game show called "Debt," which gives contestants the opportunity to win enough money to rid themselves of personal debt — uh, credit.

Battling Over Education's True Faith

Continued From Page 9

"drill sheets and making funny sounds." Students in phonics classes now learn the sounds that letters make using children's literature, she said, just as they might in a whole language class. Phonics' newest incarnation represents "a middle ground," she said.

But ask Dr. Ravitch if whole language, to which she is fiercely opposed, has also been caricatured, and she says, "The caricature of whole language is, I think, closer to the reality, that kids are supposed to guess the words in context rather than sound them out."

Which is not entirely accurate, says Kenneth Goodman, a professor in the department of language, reading and culture at the University of Arizona at Tucson and one of the pioneers of the whole language movement. "My view is that you cannot read an alphabetic language without using and learning phonics," Dr. Goodman said.

But why has that part of whole language been lost in the larger discussion? "Whole language has been demonized because you have to have good guys and bad guys," he said. "You have to have one right program."

Academia has been loath to resolve such clashes, says Jerome T. Murphy, the dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, because academics in education schools and those in math and science often view each other with distrust. "You get stereotypes," he said. "The scientists have their heads in the clouds and don't care about kids." That's a fallacy. But the other stereotype, that "all teacher educators are interested in is process," is false, too. "The contributions of both are essential to writing a good curriculum, he said.

Combining the Possible

In seeking to draft standards in science for the California board's consideration, an independent commission turned down an offer of free assistance from three Nobel laureates in science and voted to award a contract to a group of science teachers, education professors and working scientists affiliated with the California State College at San Bernardino. Faced with a backlash, the commission voted to rescind the award and revisit its decision.

The attempt to establish math standards has been no less contentious. In August, the standards commission approved a document recommending an eclectic approach to teaching math in kindergarten through the 12th grade. For traditionalists, there was an emphasis on basic skills and many mathematical concepts to be mastered. For reformers, there was a premium on students explaining how they arrived at their answers and dozens of word problems relating math to life outside the classroom.

But last Thursday, the 17-member Board of Education, which is appointed by Governor Wilson, a conservative Republican, rewrote the draft, dropping all the word problems. The board also decided against recommendations to integrate advanced mathematics throughout the middle and high school grades, outlining a traditional course of two years of algebra, a year of geometry and a year of trigonometry.

In a nod to the reformers, though, the board wrote that it was not endorsing a particular approach and that "many other combinations of these advanced subjects into courses are possible."

For teachers like Ana England, a sixth-grade math teacher in Watsonville, Calif., little is expected to change. Ms. England says she already teaches fundamental tasks like calculating the surface area and volume of a three-dimensional figure. But she does it nontraditionally, breaking her class into teams to solve word problems and explain the answers to each other.

"I've looked at the standards," Ms. England said, "and the things the board has crossed out are words like 'analyze' and 'explain your thinking.' But there's nothing in the standards that says you can't teach that. A good teacher is going to do that, in addition to teaching basic skills."

Post book department

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Jeff in Lito

Anger and Amnesty In South Africa

By Mark Mathabane

In KERNERSVILLE, N.C., it is humanly possible to forgive someone who attaches a power generator to the chained hands and feet of other human beings, calmly turns on the switch and then watches them writhe and foam blood at the mouth and ears as bursts of electricity fry every part of their bodies?

Earlier this year, when the Truth and Reconciliation Commission began its investigation of human rights abuses during the apartheid era in South Africa, I was among those who believed it was the ideal way to heal my homeland's deep racial wounds.

But in the past few months that belief has been severely tested. I've been shocked, sickened and enraged by what has surfaced during the testimony. Once again, I've felt hatred,

several bomb explosions and planting mines.

Sefola then pleaded for his life. When his pleas were ignored, he asked his interrogators if he could say something. He was permitted last rites. They untied him, and he stood up and began singing "Nkosi Sikelel' Afrika," the A.N.C. anthem. He then told his torturers that they could go ahead and kill him, but prophetically predicted that someday the A.N.C. would rule South Africa.

He resumed singing the anthem as he watched his two comrades being electrocuted. When his turn came to die, he thrust his clenched fist defiantly into the air and saluted his dead comrades in the name of the struggle. He met his fate like a true African warrior.

The three torturers who are now asking for amnesty didn't even have the decency to bury Sefola and his comrades. Instead they loaded the stiff bodies into a minibus, took them to a remote dirt road in the homeland of Bophuthatswana, placed them on a landmine and then detonated it to make it appear as if they had ineptly blown themselves up.

After listening to accounts of such atrocities, I found myself asking, Is it right to hijack justice for the sake of holding to a dubious truism about the past? What about the victims? What about the mothers who have lost their sons and daughters and husbands? What about the orphaned children I recently saw wandering the streets of my hometown of Alexandria, dressed in rags, sleeping in shacks without heat, scavenging for food in garbage heaps?

What about Given and Angie, my niece and nephew, who lost their fathers to an assassin's bullets? What about the youths scarred for life by torture? How can they be expected to accept that torturers and murderers are being set free, and that many sometimes return to their old jobs as policemen and receive pensions for their "honorable service to the country"?

The commission promised to grant amnesty to security force members who can prove that in torturing and murdering they were following orders.

But in much of the testimony I've heard — even from those whose motives for confessing have more to do with the cowardly urge to escape justice than to save their souls — few have proved that they were following specific orders.

Murderers and torturers should not be allowed to blame apartheid as their only excuse for criminal behavior. The commission should grant amnesty only to those who name exactly who gave them orders. So far, most have refused to do so. We must break their code of silence by refusing them amnesty.

Granting it to people who haven't fingered their superiors, as the commission has done many times so far, protects these suspects from being tried in criminal court or being sued by survivors or families of victims. Many of these survivors and families feel that justice has not been served. They aren't saints; they can forgive only where it is humanly possible to forgive — and where forgiveness is truly deserved.

Someone must be held responsible for these crimes. If a person proves that superiors gave him specific orders, then the superiors would be

Will my relatives and comrades be given a chance to forgive?

an emotion I fought hard to purge from my heart because it corrodes the soul and ossifies empathy.

I've wept without restraint at finally learning the fate suffered by friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors and comrades with whom I came of age after the Soweto Student Rebellion of June 16, 1976. That was the day when black South Africans finally threw down the gauntlet and dared the apartheid regime to do its worst, because we could no longer be denied freedom in our own country.

I've grappled with guilt. Guilt at recalling that two of my brothers-in-law were gunned down shortly after I published "Kaffir Boy" and began speaking out in the United States against apartheid.

Sometimes the guilt I feel is more generalized. Why did I survive when so many township youths, armed only with bricks, gasoline bombs and shields made from the dented lids of trash cans, died fighting the mightiest army in Africa? How did I escape when so many guerrilla fighters, who infiltrated the countryside, were betrayed by Askaris — former guerrillas turned informers — and then tortured and brutally murdered?

My generation was not afraid to die. That's what makes the stories revealed in testimony to the Truth Commission so wrenching.

Take the example of Harold Sefola, a member of Umkonto We Sizwe, the military wing of the African National Congress. After Sefola was betrayed by informers, the notorious Vlakplaspas police unit took him to an open field, where two of his comrades were already bound, awaiting their fate. An interrogator shoved a knife into his nose, and Sefola admitted to masterminding

Mark Mathabane, the author of "Kaffir Boy," a South African memoir, writes regularly on race and education.

Essay

WILLIAM SAFIRE

Here Come the Indys

Comatose counsels hit their stride.

WASHINGTON

My status as Certified Social Pariah has just been confirmed by the White House, which has again stricken my name from the list of invitees to the Clinton media Christmas party. Also disinvited from this taxpayer-supported stroking function is my colleague Maureen Dowd, which leaves her devastated, as she had already beribboned a puppy biscuit for the new First Dog.

All I did lately was to point to this flagrant example of malfeasance in Lee Radek's laughably titled "Public Integrity" section at Justice: The neo-Democratic-evil bureaucrats there — influenced by the unconfirmable Robert Litt, the Clintons' de facto boss of the Criminal Division — declined to prosecute a high official in the Agriculture Department, and then went to court to obstruct independent Counsel Donald Smaltz's prosecution of the same man.

Now, two years later, despite Clinton Justice's wrongful protection of a corrupt Clinton official, a jury has convicted him for lying about a \$22,000 payment. That, in my book, is also an indictment of Public Integrity. *Quis custodiet?*

Here's some good news: Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility has launched an investigation of what one official calls "sommambulism at Public Integrity." If Janet Reno lets the departing Michael Shaheen's deputy, Richard Rogers, get to the reason for the attempted prosecutorial obstruction, we may see changes at the routing core of the department.

That is but one reason that I am greeted with a sense of progress in what

has seemed to be a hopeless cause of uncovering Clinton corruption. First, see how the Indys are awakening:

- Independent Counsel Smaltz, fresh from a major conviction, is bringing former Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy to trial and is hot on the trail of Clinton's Tyson connection.
- Independent Counsel David Barrett, whose grand jury indictment of ex-Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros was handed up last week, has sent a shock of concern into stonewallers in other cases who may be misleading investigators, or feigning forgetfulness, on far weightier matters than mistress upkeep.
- Independent Counsel Ken Starr, weaving his tangled web, seems to be coming to a conclusion about hush money and the Lippo Group. (One of these years, I'm going to be right about Starr.)

Next, Chairman Dan Burton's committee in the House turns out to be more responsibly probing than many expected. Examining Reno and Louis Freeh, Burton showed he could control a newsworthy hearing; the new counsel he hired, Richard Bennett, is a pro and Representative Bob Barr is a terrier on interrogation.

Under unwavering questioning by Representative Chris Cox, Reno needed constant prompting from aides



Brian Cronin

responsible and can be tried.

Therefore, the Mandela Government should prosecute to the fullest extent of the law those who are clearly guilty and unrepentant. This may prove difficult. I know that the A.N.C., which I support, tortured and sickened by the testimony in the case against Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. No one's hands are clean. Eighteen years of living under apartheid taught me that there are no easy answers.

But the commission can set an example for South Africans and the world if, in the final report it plans to release next year, it strikes a balance between the search for the truth and the need for personal justice. Survivors and families of victims should have the prerogative to decide whether to forgive, which, remarkably, many of them choose to do.

There was a woman who spent years searching for those who had tortured and murdered her son. When the perpetrators were finally found, brought to trial and found guilty, the woman was asked by the judge what kind of punishment she wanted them to suffer.

"Punishment?" the woman asked, perplexed.

"Yes, punishment," the judge said. "We now have the power to punish such people."

"Oh, no," she said. "I was searching for these men for a different

In America

BOB HERBERT

The Success Taboo

Somehow over the past two or three decades a lot of black kids absorbed the message that academic achievement was something to be shunned. Excellence in sports or the various entertainment fields was one thing, a good thing, but high marks and academic honors were something else. Academic achievement, according to this mind-bogglingly destructive way of thinking, was a white thing, and thus in some sense contemptible. The tragic result has been that in many schools across the country black kids who apply themselves to their studies are often ridiculed and at times ostracized.

A black teacher in the Bronx told me in a despairing tone that she has male students who would rather be paraded in handcuffs before television cameras than be caught reading a book. I've had many students tell me in interviews that they are afraid to raise their hands in the classroom because they don't want to repeat the experience of being laughed at for giving the correct answer.

A black 17-year-old girl who worked part time at a mall in Marietta, Ga., was taunted recently by high school classmates who showed up at her job to express their resentment at the high marks she was getting.

Now, and not a moment too soon, comes Hugh Price, president of the National Urban League, with an ambitious first step toward turning this madness around.

"We haven't surrounded our young people with enough opportunities to excel academically and to be recognized for excelling," said Mr. Price. "We haven't had the rituals in our own community that reward young people for doing well."

The Urban League has drawn together 20 national black organizations, including the Congress of National Black Churches, for what it calls the Campaign for African-American Achievement. The idea is to improve the academic standing of black youngsters by encouraging and rewarding excellence in the classroom, and by improving the quality of the education that is offered to black youngsters in the public schools.

A statement announcing the campaign said: "We have to reverse the increasing gap in academic achievement between African-American and other children. We have to increase the low rates of enrollment of African-American youngsters in college preparatory courses and attack the inequitable allocation

of resources for public education." There is an urgency in Mr. Price's manner as he talks about this effort. He and his colleagues recognize that black men and women will have to be substantially better prepared educationally if they are to survive economically as we move into the 21st century. Employers, as Mr. Price noted, "expect much more in the way of academic preparation than ever before." And affirmative action, however one feels about it, is almost certain to continue its fade from the scene.

The achievement campaign will try in a variety of ways to generate energy

When black students excel.

enthusiasm among students and parents for the hard work that is necessary to succeed academically. This will not be easy in environments that are plagued by poverty, broken families, drug abuse, violence and the widespread notion that what is taught in the classroom is not relevant to the lives of the students.

The campaign will establish a honor society, called the National Achievers Society, to focus attention on black youngsters who excel academically. The first induction ceremony, to be presided over by Gen. Colin Powell, will be held next spring.

September has been designated Achievement Month by the campaign. The plan is to have Urban League affiliates, black churches and other organizations conduct a month-long series of high-profile events each year celebrating the efforts of black youngsters who are doing well in school.

Meanwhile, leaders of the campaign are working with professional organizations and universities around the country to determine where improvements in the public schools need to be made and what specific kinds of academic help are needed for under-achieving students.

This is not a perfect plan. Much of it will be modified and some of it will fail. But it does send the crucial message that academic achievement is as important for black people as anyone else. It's a message that somehow has escaped the consciousness of too many black children.

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From the author of EMMETT and AWARENESS, now Miriam Adahan's strategies for coping with everyday stress are available in convenient, pocket-size format. Adahan combines psychological insight with perspectives from Jewish sources. Chapters are very short and to-the-point, so that these Handbooks can give the reader a "pick-me-up" when needing a wise word from a friendly counselor who has wrestled with the same problems.

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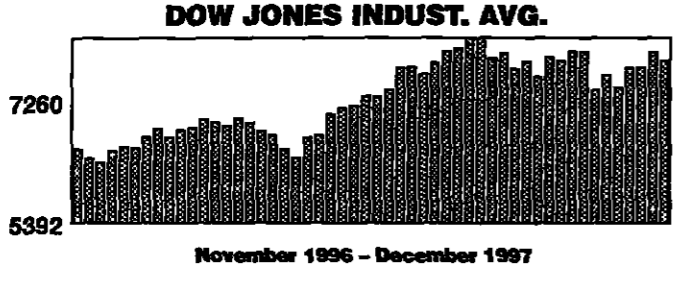
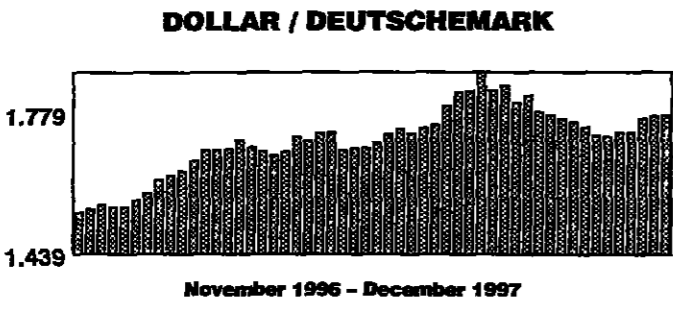
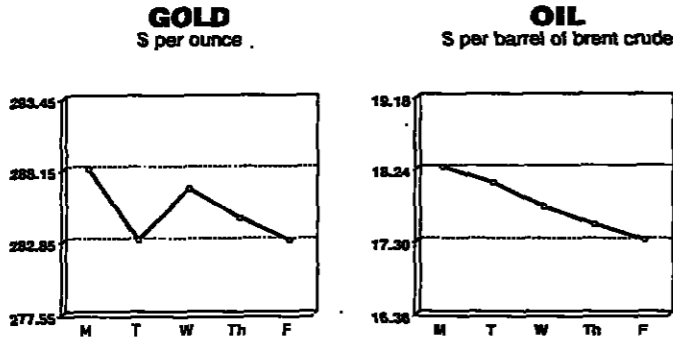
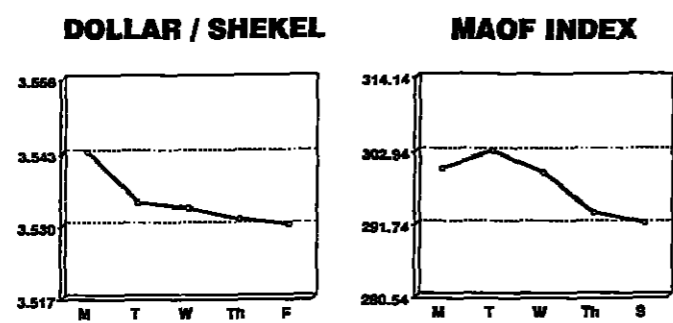
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MARKETS

in brief



IEC raises \$425m. in US bonds
 Israel Electric Corporation last week raised \$425 million — about \$300m. through the issuance of 30-year bonds and the remainder through the sale of 10-year bonds. The IEC initially estimated it would raise \$250m. as part of its 12-month plan to raise money for long-term projects.
David Harris

Tichon calls for capital investment aid rethink
 Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon recently called on the government and the Knesset to revamp the law encouraging capital investment, which is "old and anachronistic" and not suited to the needs of high-tech industry. Tichon said this during a tour of Jerusalem's high-tech companies, including ECI Telecom, AVX-Israel, and Rocard International.
Judy Siegel

Panel to explore new central-bank bill

By DAVID HARRIS
 The cabinet yesterday approved the creation of a committee to formulate a new Bank of Israel Law. The committee members, to be headed by a retired judge, have yet to be selected. The decision was welcomed by the central bank as "a very positive step." The committee will examine all the functions of the bank and decide how best it should operate, while ensuring its independence from the government or any other body. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will appoint the members of the committee, which will make its recommendation no later than June 30, 1998. The proposal was brought to the government by Netanyahu, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman and Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi. The move came after Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel said any reform in the central bank should originate from the government.

During the summer, Labor MK and former finance minister Avraham Shohat attempted to introduce legislation on the subject. In May the central bank called for the creation of a new basic law for the bank and a board of monetary experts to help the government achieve the government-set monetary targets. The bank sees the need for the following key criterion to be met by the committee's recommendations:
 • The guarantee of full independence for the central bank to enable it to achieve the desired stability.
 • The guarantee of transparency and accountability to the government, Knesset and public.
 • The establishment of a decision-making framework within the bank. This includes the creation of a monetary board, to be headed by the governor and comprising experts independent of the bank.
 In July, the bank handed to Netanyahu its recommendations for the new law.

Ind. exports up 7.2% in Nov.

Industrial exports, including diamonds, totalled \$1.65 billion in November, a 7.2 percent increase over the same period a year ago. Exports of polished diamonds totalled \$391 million last month, a 0.8% increase over November 1996, while industrial exports not including diamonds totalled \$1.26m., a 9.4% increase over the same period one year ago. While, the high-tech sector and some textile and clothing exporters noted an increase in sales abroad, other traditional industries registered a decrease.
Jennifer Friedlin

Israel Chemicals subsidiary wins \$60m. desalination deal

By DAN GERSTENFELD
 Israel Desalination Engineering said yesterday it has won a contract to supply six desalination plants for \$60 million to two Indian refineries. The company, which is a subsidiary of Israel Chemicals, won two international tenders. IDE will supply the plants to new refineries which are currently being built in the Jamnagar state in northwestern India. In a statement, IDE said the first installation, which weighs 1,300

tonnes, will be sent to India next week in a ship that was leased especially for this assignment. Four of the plants would be installed in the world's largest refinery, Reliance, which is currently being built by the American company Bechtel Group in a total investment of \$2.5 billion. The two other plants will be sent to a different refinery operated by the Swiss-Swedish engineering company ABB. In a statement, CEO David Waxman said IDE recently won another contract for the supply of six desalination plants to a power plant in Sardinia. In addition, the company sold facilities to the Puerto Rican plant of Enron. The company said it is currently holding 30 percent of the world market for supply of water to the industry, based on the desalination of sea water. IDE is currently working together with its American partners on the development of the world's largest desalination facility here. This plant will supply 300,000 cubic-meters a day of drinking water to 1.5 million people. The company has so far supplied 300 desalination plants to 40 countries.

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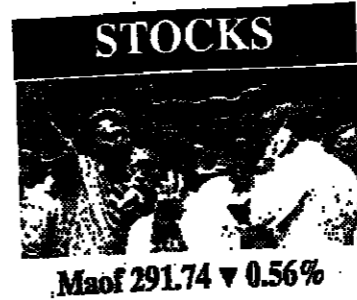
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TASE falls after Israeli shares decline in NY



Maof 291.74 + 0.56%

Israeli stocks dropped yesterday following losses over the weekend in companies listed both in Tel Aviv and New York. Analysts said the drop was tempered by expectations for a report today showing inflation is subdued.

The Maof Index of 25 stocks dropped 0.56 percent to 291.74. The Mishtanim Index of 100 most-traded stocks decreased 0.72% to 279.75. The Tel Aviv Continuous Trading Index lost 0.7% to 93.9.

Leading stocks down were Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., down 5% to NIS 155.36; Bank Hapoalim Ltd., down 0.25% to 8.19; and software house Formula Systems Ltd., off 3.7% to 109.

Other notable declines included Koor Industries Ltd. down 2.1% to 375, and Nice Systems Ltd., the producer of voice and data recording and archiving systems, slumped 8% to 134.3.

The stock market had two "contrary drivers," said Eli Nahum, head trader at Zannex Securities Ltd. There were "good expectations" for the consumer price index being released today against

The Nasdaq Combined Composite Index, which includes a number of Israeli stocks, dropped 1.41% on Friday.

Offsetting the drops in Tel Aviv were Bank Leumi le-Israel Ltd., up 0.75% at 5.5, Bezeq Ltd., up 1.5% at 9.4, and Israel Discount Bank Ltd., up 0.75% at 3.56.

Bezeq was reiterated "buy" at Sahar Securities. Israel Chemicals Ltd. rose 1.5% to 4.74 after announcing a subsidiary got \$60 million of contracts to supply desalination plants to India.

Koor, Israel's largest publicly traded company, will invest \$20 million to form a company that will provide Internet access services, Ma'ariv reported yesterday.

On the economic front, the Central Bureau of Statistics is scheduled to release inflation figures for November today. Analysts estimated that the CPI rose 0.3% as housing prices slowed. Stock investors watch interest rates because higher rates force companies to pay more to borrow, cutting into profit and potentially into stock prices.

(Bloomberg)

MISHTANIM LEADING TASE ISSUES

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KARAM SMALL CAPITALIZATION TASE ISSUES

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Warburg to make \$800m. bid for Christie's

SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the investment banking arm of Swiss Bank Corp., will offer 500 million pounds (\$800m.) for auction house Christie's International Plc, a source said.

Directors of the 231-year-old Christie's were expected to meet yesterday in London to discuss the bid, the person said. The company said last week it was in talks with an unnamed buyer after takeover speculation pushed its shares up 33 percent in four days.

The bid would give the auctioneer access to Warburg's financial resources to help it underwrite increasingly expensive art sales, while Warburg would gain from being able to offer Christie's exper-

tise to its private clients wishing to invest in art. Investor interest is increasing in Christie's and rival Sotheby's Holdings Inc., which share the world market for art sales. With sales booming and new markets like Asia and Latin America opening, investors see potential for profit growth.

A Texas-based investment group, the Bass family, this week sought US Federal Trade Commission permission to increase its holding in Sotheby's to as much as 25% from 13.5%.

Christie's sold \$1.6 billion of art through its sale rooms last year surpassing Sotheby's, which sold \$1.60b., for the first time since 1954. (Bloomberg)

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Katharine Hepburn (left) and Spencer Tracy co-star together for the first time in 'Woman of the Year.'

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8:30 Dites Moi Tout
9:00 Reading
9:25 Social Sciences

CHANNEL 2

- 6:15 Today's Programs
6:30 Animal Fun
7:00 This Morning

CHANNEL 4

- 6:00 Open University
6:30 Air Combat
6:55 Visions of Heaven and Hell

CHANNEL 5

- 6:30 Star News
7:00 Oprah Winfrey
8:00 Fashion TV

CHANNEL 6

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6:55 Visions of Heaven and Hell

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